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can you find for me the interview that was done by the couple who accepted australian geographics to go and live in arnham land and survive for a year

I believe the story you're referring to is about Mike and Susan Cusack, who were selected by Australian Geographic in 1987 to live in isolation in the remote Kimberley region (western Australia) for a full year as the magazine's first "wilderness couple." This matches your description closely, though the location was the Kimberley rather than Arnhem Land—possibly a mix-up, as both are vast, rugged northern Australian wilderness areas with Indigenous cultural significance. No similar year-long survival challenge sponsored by Australian Geographic appears in Arnhem Land based on extensive searches.

The couple's experience was documented in Australian Geographic articles at the time and revisited in later retrospectives. A key interview with Mike Cusack about their year, titled "'A Year in the Wilderness' - Interview with Kimberley adventurer and Expedition Leader Mike Cusack," was published on YouTube in 2016 by Aurora Expeditions (where Mike worked as a guide). Here's the link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ml6SJSZCees

Summary of the Interview and Their Story

In the interview, Mike reflects on the experience 30 years later (as of 2017), describing it as life-changing and something he'd do again. Key details from the interview and related Australian Geographic articles:

- **Background and Selection**: The idea came from Australian Geographic founder Dick Smith, inspired by *Robinson Crusoe* and a story of a Canadian couple surviving above the Arctic Circle. He wanted to see if a modern couple could thrive in the wilderness like Australia's pioneers. Mike (a ranger) and Susan (a naturopath) applied after seeing an ad in the magazine in 1986. They were chosen and dropped off on June 28, 1987, at Kunmunya (a former Presbyterian mission site) in the western Kimberley, near Walcott Inlet and Tranquil Bay.
- **Preparation and Setup**: They handled their own logistics, bringing a boat, generator, two-way radio (for emergency contact with the Royal Flying Doctor Service in Derby, 240 km away), solar panels, and a year's supply of dehydrated food. No other human contact was allowed except radio check-ins.
- **Challenges Faced**:
    - It was the driest year in 30 years, with poor rainfall during the Wet season. Water sources like creeks and rivers dried up, forcing Mike to haul 19 liters of water daily from a spring 3 km away for three months.

    - They built a basic 4x8m two-room house from local materials like Darwin woollybutt and bloodwood trees, plus salvaged corrugated iron for the roof. Elevated off the ground for flood protection and airflow, construction took nearly seven months amid extreme heat (overnight lows above 20°C, daytime highs of 34–45°C for months), humidity, dehydration, and a late-September bushfire.
    - Wildlife competed for resources, including feral donkeys (later eradicated from the area). Animals like Gilbert's dragons (ta-ta lizards) became daily companions, feeding on termites exposed during building.
    - Emotional and physical strains were intense in the first six months, but the Wet season's rains brought renewal, with explosive plant growth and a nearby waterfall flowing for the first time since their arrival—coinciding with Christmas.
- **Highlights and Reflections**:
    - The isolation fostered a deep connection to nature and the land's ancient history, including the Worora people's 400 generations of survival and nearby rock art depicting Wandjina (rain spirits).
    - Mike describes feeling humbled by their "insignificance" in the vast landscape yet empowered by overcoming challenges. It was an "extraordinary" dream fulfilled, teaching self-reliance and appreciation for the Kimberley's "sublime beauty and quiet potency."
    - An unexpected air-drop from a neighbor (Rob Barrett of Beverley Springs Station, 160 km away) brought Christmas supplies, like "excited kids at a party."
    - Post-experience, the year launched Mike's career in adventure guiding; he's led Kimberley expeditions for Aurora Expeditions since 1998. Susan and Mike remained together, and the experience solidified their bond.
- **Legacy**: Australian Geographic awarded them a commemorative honor in 2017 for the 30th anniversary. The Kimberley has seen more tourism since (now with 16+ commercial vessels), but Mike emphasizes it remains one of the world's last great wildernesses. His advice: "Go out and do it"—adventures push limits and yield rewards.

If this isn't the exact story you meant (e.g., if it was definitely Arnhem Land), provide more details like approximate year or names, and I can search further. For the full original articles, check Australian Geographic's archives:

- 1987: One year in the wilderness
- Mike Cusack's thirty years of the wilderness

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38 sources

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